

Ellis Island

Self-Guided Activity (Grades 5-8)

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Ellis Island Immigration Museum
Statue of Liberty National Monument
New York, NY 10004



Immigrant Eyes 5th-8th Grade On-Site Activity

Leaving Home

Looking at the chart, what are two reasons why immigrants moved to the United States?

1. _____

2. _____

Treasures from Home

Many passengers who immigrated to Ellis Island never saw their homeland again. List five items that you may have brought to the United States.



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Through America's Gate

Ask a Park Ranger to look at a button hook. Looking over the button hook, what do you think that item was used for?



Examine the list of diseases inspectors looked for at Ellis Island. What does a chalk mark mean? What type of disease might this immigrant (on this photo) have?

Medical and Legal Inspection:

During the legal inspection, who might you turn to for help if you did not speak the language? Also, what question(s) on the manifest (shipping) record do you think are the most difficult to answer?



If you were detained (held back) for medical reasons, describe what happens to you during this time.

Write one word to describe your feelings here.



Visit the Dormitory:

Why would they keep you in a dormitory and how would you feel if you were kept there?



Starting a New Life

Explore the street signs in the Lower East Side. What immigrant group do you think lives in this neighborhood? What advantages do you think immigrants may have living in an area like this? Why did the immigrants form "Ghettos?" (Note: The word ghetto has been defined as a part of a city in which members of a particular group or race live usually in poor conditions).



Think of two similarities and two differences to how immigrants are processed at Ellis Island to how immigrants arrive today.

Showcase Your Family

What is your chosen heritage?

What did your family bring with them?